

Web-Wise 2001—the Digital Divide: A Conference on Libraries and Museums in the Digital World

February 12-14, 2001

Introduction

The second annual Web-Wise Conference, sponsored by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, focuses on the role of libraries and museums in bridging the digital divide.

A Four-Step Process

Libraries and museums provide a full range of tools to bridge the Digital Divide that separates the “haves” from the “have-nots” in the Information Age. Librarians are information navigators who help people find the information they need and want. Museums, from arboretums to zoos, provide an incredible variety of dynamic educational experiences to support a lifetime of learning. Four essential tools are required to bridge the Digital Divide:

- Literacy, the foundation for all information use
- Access to free public information
- Training to empower individuals to find and use information effectively.
- Content, the rich source material that is needed to make the Internet a truly powerful information resource.

Program

Monday, February 12

Reception, Renaissance Hotel

6:00 PM

Tuesday, February 13

7:30 AM **Registration and Breakfast Buffet**

8:30 AM **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Beverly Sheppard, IMLS

Keynote Address

Tony Wilhelm, Benton Foundation

9:45 AM **Break and Project Demonstrations**

Project Demonstrations
9:45 – 10:30 AM

Hannahville Indian Community, Wilson, Michigan. Project HOW: History on the Web. <http://www.hvl.bia.edu>

The project Web site offers accurate information, gathered from area museums and tribal elders, about the Hannahville Indian Reservation, the Potawatomi people, and other Michigan Native Americans. It demonstrates how groups that have been underrepresented in the electronic environment can use technology to tell their own stories.

Tufts University. The Edwin C. Bolles Collection: A Digital Archive of London.
<http://www.library.tufts.edu/archives/coll/collections/ms004/tulips.html>

The Bolles digital archive represents a comprehensive, integrated resource of texts, images and maps documenting the history and topography of London. The collection can be used in ways that are possible only in the electronic environment, creating a new model for access to primary and secondary source material.

University of Denver. The Colorado Digitization Project.
<http://coloradodigital.coalliance.org>

This large collaboration provides unified access to the holdings of more than 40 archives, historical societies, libraries and museums statewide. Search capabilities include a clickable map for geographic searching and a union catalog of search terms. The project is a model for the integration of digital resources from disparate collections with different traditions of descriptive practice.

Johns Hopkins University. The Lester S. Levy Collection Music Recognition Project. <http://levysheetmusic.mse.jhu.edu>

The online Lester S. Levy Sheet Music Collection from the Johns Hopkins University's Eisenhower Library uses optical music recognition (OMR) software, MIDI playback, automated name authority control and music searching to exploit the full potential of the collection. The demonstrators will discuss how each of these elements will be integrated into a digital workflow management system.

State Botanical Garden of Georgia. Endangered Plants of Southeastern U.S.

A partnership of the State Botanical Garden of Georgia, the Duke University Biological and Environmental Sciences Library, and the non-profit Bloom, Inc., is creating an easily accessible digital library of information on endangered plant species of the Southeastern United States for a wide audience in the region and nationwide.

10:30 AM **Conference Session - Literacy**

Session Leader: **Keith Fiels**, Massachusetts State Library

Speakers:

Children's Museum of Indianapolis – Jeff Patchen

The Indianapolis Public Library and the Children's Museum of Indianapolis worked together to create a unique literacy program in an inner-city neighborhood where geographic and social barriers prevent children from visiting public libraries.

Vermont Department of Libraries – Sybil Brigham McShane

The literacy needs of a rural population are being met through an innovative mobile program in Vermont.

Lower East Side Tenement Museum – Jeff Tancil

In New York City, the Lower East Side Tenement Museum is helping new immigrants learn English through documents left by earlier immigrants and sponsoring original, web-based art-works that explore immigration, migration and urban housing.

12:00 PM **Lunch**

1:30 PM **Conference Session - Access**

Session Leader: **Su-Shing Chen**, University of Missouri

Speakers:

Wayne State University — Dian Walster

Statistics have been collected about the degree of access the poor have to digital resources, but little is known about how they can benefit from increased access. Researchers are studying the impact of information access on the lives of the urban poor.

National Science Foundation – Lee Zia

The National Science Foundation has launched the National Science, Mathematics, Engineering, and Technology Education Digital Library (NSDL) Program to enable discovery and access to a wide variety of educational materials and environments. While the immediate aim is to improve student learning in science, math, engineering, and technology in formal settings, the library is also envisioned as a major new educational resource serving a general audience of all ages.

University of Illinois Ann Bishop; Imani Bazzell (SisterNet)

Information is power, and shared information is more powerful. Researchers are modeling how a community-wide approach can help Black women, healthcare professionals, and information providers acquire and use online information effectively.

3:00 PM

Break and Project Demonstrations

Project Demonstrations

3:00 –3:45 PM

University of Texas. Building Better Web Sites. <http://imls.lib.utexas.edu>

Building Better Web Sites is a project to help institutions such as libraries and museums use analytical tools to develop more successful Web sites. Demonstrators will discuss evaluation techniques such as focus groups, data logs, and usability tests, and will illustrate their applicability to Web pages tested during the project.

University of Idaho. INSIDE Idaho. <http://insideuidaho.edu>

INSIDE (Interactive Numeric Spatial Information Data Engine) Idaho is a digital data clearinghouse that provides a centralized location for data produced by various federal, state government and local agencies. The website includes four major components: GeoData, Numeric Data, Atlas Maps, and Interactive Mapping, with an online tutorial to assist users.

Massachusetts State Library. Adaptive Technologies for Disabled Users

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners has developed a planning process to help libraries assess the needs of consumers with disabilities in their communities. This demonstration, involving representatives from a public library that has used the process and an adaptive technology vendor, will show how visually impaired users can access printed information and the Internet through speech recognition and large print software.

University of Texas at Austin. Digital Library of Vertebrates.

High-resolution CT scanning is a breakthrough technology for non-destructive imaging of both the internal structure and overall shape of three-dimensional objects, even very tiny objects. Using important fossil and recent specimens from 17 natural history museums around the world, this project will demonstrate how museums can gain unprecedented imagery of the most delicate and rarest objects in their collections and make them widely available.

Michigan State University. National Gallery of the Spoken Word

A collaborative project involving the humanities, engineering and library science, the project will create the first large-scale, organized online repository of spoken word collections. It will address issues of information storage, standards for preservation and access, and integrated searching as it identifies and preserves crucial materials in tape libraries throughout the United States.

3:45 PM **Conference Session - Training**

Session Leader: **Liz Bishoff**, Colorado Digitization Project

Speakers:

University of Michigan – Joan C. Durrance

Citizens and local community organizations gain a wide range of benefits from digital community information. At present librarians lack the tools and training to capture these benefits. Researchers are documenting them so that librarians will be able to more effectively evaluate the impact of their CI services.

Connecticut Historical Society – Nancy Finlay, Allison Zhang, Connecticut Historical Society; Kathleen Foulke, Mystic Seaport

The Connecticut History Online project brings together material on Connecticut history from the University of Connecticut, the Connecticut Historical Society, and the Mystic Seaport Museum in a digital library created collaboratively with teachers for classroom use.

Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis – Diana Rennels & Jill Taylor, Brown Elementary, Brownsburg, Indiana

Third grade students in rural Indiana studied great works of art and created their own portfolios of written, visual and oral expression through videoconferencing, digital image capture and Web-based research in a partnership involving the classroom teacher, the school library media specialist, and a variety of museums and libraries.

5:00 PM **Adjourn**

Wednesday, February 14

8:00 AM **Breakfast Buffet**

8:30 AM **Conference Session – Content**

Session Leader: **Ann Russell**, Northeast Document Conservation Center

Speakers:

Montana State University —Elaine Peterson; Magdalene Moccasin (Little Big Horn College)

The University, together with the Museum of the Rockies and tribal experts, created a database of images of the Indian peoples of the Northern Great Plains with accurate and culturally sensitive cataloging data and descriptive materials.

Illinois State Library – Anne Craig

Access to government information is crucial in a democratic society, and electronic access is increasingly viewed as essential. State libraries are working with state agencies to create Government Information Locator Services and with other state libraries to coordinate their efforts into a powerful resource for government information.

Conference Session – Content (Cont.)

Amistad Research Center – Brenda Square, Rebecca Hankins & Joel Williams

In partnership with Louisiana State University, the Center created a digital library of images and documents relating to the historic Amistad Incident and the committee of anti-slavery “defenders” from which the American Missionary Association developed.

Japanese American National Museum – Audrey Lee-Sung

“Boyle Heights: Neighborhood Sites and Insights” will promote intercultural relations among five organizations and their neighborhood in Los Angeles through a project to document and interpret the community’s history.

9:45 AM **Break**

10:15 AM **Conference Session - On My Mind**

Museum and library leaders share their thoughts and invite audience discussion

Session Leader: **Deanna Marcum**, Council on Library and Information Resources

Speakers: **Liz Bishoff**, Colorado Digitization Project
 Stephen Griffin, National Science Foundation
 Ann Russell, Northeast Document Conservation Center
 Scott Sayre, Minnesota Art Institute
 Rick Weingarten, American Library Association

11:30 AM **Wrap-up**

12:00 PM **Adjourn**